

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 EB-03 TRSE-00

OMB-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 L-02

RSR-01 /054 W

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R 091741Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2444

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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LIMDIS

E.O.: 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, EC, FR

SUBJ: VIEWS OF FRENCH OFFICIAL ON US/EC RELATIONS

SUMMARY: BERNARD, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL OF ELYSEE, INDICATES THAT, CONTRARY TO ALLEGATIONS IN RECENT NEWSWEEK ARTICLE, GOF IS COMPLETELY OPEN-MINDED ON PRINCIPLE OF US/EC SUMMIT. HOWEVER, HE SAID GOF BELIEVED THERE SHOULD BE A VERY CLEAR IDEA OF OBJECTIVES AND HOPES FOR ACCOMPLISHMENT BEFORE DECISION WAS REACHED. HE SAID GOF WAS STILL OPPOSED TO A MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENT NIXON AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE EC NINE AS A GROUP BUT DID NOT OPPOSE A MEETING WITH COMMISSION OR COUNCIL PRESIDENTS. IN CONTRAST TO OTHER SENIOR FRENCH OFFICIALS WITH WHOM WE HAVE TALKED IN RECENT

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WEEKS, HE APPEARED RELATIVELY RELAXED ABOUT THE MONETARY

SITUATION. END SUMMARY.

1. ECON/COM MIN CALLED ON BERNARD, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE ELYSEE, YESTERDAY FOR A FIRST TOUR D'HORIZONE WITH HOM FOLLOWING HIS RETURN FROM LEAVE. BERNARD NOTED THAT IN HIS NEW POSITION HE IS MUCH MORE CONCERNED WITH INTERNAL PROBLEMS THAN WITH FOREIGN AFFAIRS. NONETHELESS, HE IS STILL SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE INTERMINISTERIAL COUNCIL ON EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICY AND MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE FOLLOWED US/EC RELATIONS FAIRLY CLOSELY AND WAS IN A POSITION TO DISCUSS GOF POLICY ON THESE MATTERS.

2. COMMENTING ON DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE PAST MONTH, BERNARD SAID HE THOUGHT PROGRESS ON PREPARATIONS FOR A US/EC SUMMIT HAD BEEN MADE AT THE COPENHAGEN MEETING OF THE EC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. HE SAID THERE WAS GENERAL AGREEMENT AMONG THE NINE THAT THEY HAD TO ESTABLISH A COMMON EUROPEAN POSITION BEFORE THERE COULD BE A MEETING WITH PRESIDENT NIXON. ON THIS POINT, HE SAID HE HAD DETECTED A CERTAIN INCONSISTENCY IN U.S. VIEWS. WE KEPT SAYING THAT WE WANTED THE EC TO SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE WHEN IT TALKED TO THE U.S. BUT THEN SEEMED IMPATIENT WHEN THE EC TOOK TOO MUCH TIME TO REACH A COMMON POSITION.

3. BERNARD ALSO MADE IT CLEAR GOF POSITION ON FORMULA FOR POSSIBLE U.S. SUMMIT HAD NOT CHANGED. (IT WILL BE RECALLED THAT, IN A CONVERSATION SOME MONTHS AGO, BERNARD HAD SAID THAT THE GOF WOULD OPPOSE A MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENT NIXON AND THE EC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS - PARIS 2047.) HE SAID THAT IF THE CHIEF OF STATE OF THE MOST POWERFUL NATION ON EARTH SAT DOWN WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THE EC, HE WOULD OVERAWE THEM AND THERE COULD BE NO DIALOGUE OF EQUALS. IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, HE MET WITH THE CHIEFS OF STATE OF THE NINE, THIS WOULD BE AN HISTORIC OCCASION COMPARABLE TO SUCH GREAT EVENTS AS THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA. MEETINGS LIKE THIS WERE HELD ONLY WHEN SOME GREAT HISTORIC PURPOSE JUSTIFIED THEM. IF SUCH A MEETING WERE HELD NOW, THERE WOULD BE NATURAL EXPECTATION THAT IT WOULD PRODUCE HISTORIC DECISIONS. BUT THE GOF COULD NOT IMAGINE WHAT GREAT DECISIONS COULD EMERGE FROM SUCH A MEETING, AND IT WOULD INEVITABLY GENERATE A SENSE OF DISAPPOINTMENT. CON-

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SEQUENTLY, GOF WOULD BE OPPOSED TO SUCH A MEETING. ON THE OTHER HAND, GOF HAD NO OBJECTION TO A MEETING OF PRESIDENT NIXON WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION OR THE PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OR BOTH.

4. BERNARD THEN BROUGHT UP THE RECENT ARTICLE IN NEWSWEEK ON ALLEGED U.S.-FRENCH DIFFERENCES OVER THE ATLANTIC SUMMIT (PARIS 21462). HE SAID THE ALLEGATIONS MADE IN THIS ARTICLE

WERE ABSOLUTELY FALSE. THE GOF WAS NOT TRYING TO BLOCK U.S. INITIATIVES IN THE "YEAR OF EUROPE." ON THE OTHER HAND, THE GOF BELIEVED THAT PREPARATIONS FOR A US/EC SUMMIT SHOULD BE MADE VERY CAREFULLY. IN PARTICULAR, THERE SHOULD BE A VERY CLEAR IDEA OF WHAT THE OBJECTIVES OF THE SUMMIT WERE AND WHAT IT WAS HOPED COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED BEFORE AGREEMENT ON A MEETING WAS REACHED. ONE DID NOT HOLD MEETINGS LIKE THIS FOR NOTHING. BERNARD SAID THE GOF WAS COMPLETELY OPEN-MINDED ON THE PRINCIPLE OF THE SUMMIT. INDEED, HE WAS SURE THAT GOF WOULD WELCOME PRESIDENT NIXON TO EUROPE "WITH OPEN ARMS." THE GOF BELIEVED THAT PRESIDENT NIXON WAS FAR MORE FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARD EUROPE AND THE MAINTENANCE OF TRADITIONAL ALLIANCE POLICY THAN ANY CONCEIVABLE ALTERNATIVE AND IT WAS DISTRESSED AND CONCERNED ABOUT THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PRESIDENT WAS BEING NEEDLESSLY DISTRACTED FROM THE IMPORTANT BUSINESS OF THE U.S. AND THE WORLD.

5. BERNARD MADE IT CLEAR THAT AN IMPORTANT INGREDIENT IN GOOD US/EC RELATIONS WAS THE STATUS OF THE DOLLAR. HOWEVER, IN CONTRAST TO OTHER FRENCH OFFICIALS WITH WHOM WE HAVE TALKED IN RECENT WEEKS, HE APPEARED RELATIVELY RELAXED ABOUT THE MONETARY SITUATION. HE THOUGHT THE WASHINGTON MEETING OF THE C-20 HAD GONE EXTREMELY WELL AND HE WAS GRATIFIED AT THE CURRENT LEVEL OF THE DOLLAR, WHICH HAD, AMONG OTHER THINGS, MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR THE EC TO TAKE A MORE RELAXED POSITION ON THE TRADE NEGOTIATIONS. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE DID NOT CONCEAL AN UNDERLYING ANXIETY ABOUT THE FUTURE. IF THE DOLLAR STARTED DOWN AGAIN, HE SAID, ACRISIS ATMOSPHERE COULD DEVELOP VERY QUICKLY WHICH WOULD INEVITABLY HAVE REPERCUSSIONS ON US/EC RELATIONS.

DECONTROL DECEMBER 31, 1977.

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